



GAIL FARBER, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

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July 21, 2009

IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE:

**WM-3**

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Gail Farber *Gail Farber*  
Director of Public Works

### **FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY LEVEE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

In response to hurricane Katrina and the resulting catastrophic failure of the levee system that protects the Gulf Coast, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has accelerated its National Levee Certification Program. This program seeks to identify and assess the risk associated with flood damage to properties protected by existing levee systems. Under the program, local, State, and Federal agencies are required to certify that levees they maintain meet Federal flood protection standards. Properties protected by levees which do not meet Federal standards will be designated as high flood hazard areas under the program. Preceding the designation of high flood hazard areas and mapping, FEMA will begin requiring property owners with federally insured mortgages to purchase flood hazard insurance.

In compliance with the program, we have analyzed 65 miles of what FEMA defines as levees of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. Our analysis indicates that 3.4 miles of levees along Compton Creek and 7.2 miles of levees along Dominguez Channel do not meet the Federal flood protection standards. Communities protected by these levees include the County unincorporated area of Rancho Dominguez and the Cities of Carson, Compton, Long Beach, and Los Angeles.

FEMA indicates that designating these affected communities as flood hazard areas may take several years. During this time, we plan to evaluate options for mitigating the flood risks in coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers and to request Federal funding for this work.

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We will work with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) representative from each city and share our analysis and potential flood risk. These cities are also NFIP member agencies and have shared responsibility to communicate flood risks to property owners within their cities. As representative for unincorporated areas, we will work with affected Board offices to communicate the same for owners of property affected in County unincorporated communities.

We will provide more details of the status of our analysis, potential flood risk, and mitigation options at our next monthly water resources briefing for your Deputies and in subsequent memos. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call me or your staff may contact Mark Pestrella, Deputy Director, at (626) 458-4001 or [mpestrel@dpw.lacounty.gov](mailto:mpestrel@dpw.lacounty.gov).

GD:ac

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cc: Chief Executive Office (William T Fujioka, Lari Sheehan)  
County Counsel  
Executive Office